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NEWS RELEASE

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Former Postal Clerk Sentenced

United States Attorney David E. O'Meilia announced that Tonda Sue Hayes, 42, of Vinita, Oklahoma, was sentenced in federal court in Tulsa on April 30 for the crime of bank fraud.

Hayes, a former postal clerk at the Vinita post office, was sentenced to a term of ten months, with the first five months to be served in prison and the final five months on home detention. Following her incarceration, Hays will be on supervised release for five years. Hayes had earlier entered a guilty plea, pursuant to a plea agreement, to one of twenty-two counts contained in the indictment charging her with Bank Fraud. The criminal charges, which also included a count of delaying the U.S. mail, were based on the misuse of her former position as a postal employee between January and March 2007. She pried into the private mail flowing between businesses operating in the Vinita area and elsewhere and obtained confidential financial information such as credit card account and bank routing numbers. She used this confidential information to make payments on her personal credit balances - which were then charged against the bank accounts of the local businesses.

Chief U.S. District Judge Claire V. Egan presided. The prosecution of the case was handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney Kenneth Snoke. The charges were the result of an investigation by the Office of Inspector General of the U.S. Postal Service.